

SENATE JOURNAL
ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE
THIRTY-FOURTH LEGISLATURE
FIRST SPECIAL SESSION

Juneau, Alaska

Saturday

August 2, 2025

First Day

Pursuant to the July 2 Proclamation of the Governor calling for the convening of the First Special Session of the Thirty-fourth Legislature, the Senate was called to order by President Stevens at 11:03 a.m.

The roll showed nineteen members present. Senator Shower was absent.

The prayer was offered by the Chaplain, Aren Buchheit, Senate Guest Page. Senator Hoffman moved and asked unanimous consent the prayer be spread. Without objection, it was so ordered.

As we each walked into this building today, we each entered these doors beneath the face of Mount Juneau Yadaa.at Kalé. As we gather here now, Mount Juneau still looks over us.

What a privilege to be here, in such a land of such majesty. God give us grace to see that majesty and that privilege and inspire us to acknowledge the responsibility we have to it. To steward and serve it, and all of the people who call this place home.

Each of us has come from a different place, each of us are proud of the Alaska we call home. A place of majesty, where we and our communities have built our lives and love.

May we honor the great tradition and responsibility of stewarding this land, honor the people we represent who live on this land, work on this land, and love this land, and those who have done so since time immemorial.

May we find the inspiration and commitment to continue to steward this great land in a manner just and sincere in the positions of power and responsibility we hold. Amen.

Senator Dunbar led the Senate in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Certification

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the journal for the one hundred twentieth legislative day and the first supplement of the First Session of the Thirty-fourth Legislature be approved as certified by the Secretary. Without objection, it was so ordered.

Senator Myers moved and asked unanimous consent Senator Shower be excused from a call of the Senate today. Without objection, Senator Shower was excused.

Messages from the Governor

Executive Proclamation

Under the authority of Article II, Section 9, and Article III, Section 17, Constitution of the State of Alaska, and in the public interest, I call the Thirty-Fourth Legislature of the State of Alaska into its first special session in Juneau, Alaska, in the legislative chambers on August 2, 2025, at 10:00 a.m., to consider the following subjects:

- The creation of a Department of Agriculture
- Education Reform

Dated this 2nd day of July 2025 at 10:00 a.m.

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

EO 137

The following letter dated August 1 was read:

Dear President Stevens:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting an Executive Order establishing the Alaska Department of Agriculture. Pursuant to my authority under Article III, Section 23, of the Alaska Constitution to make changes in the organization of the Executive Branch and in the assignment of functions among its units, this Order would create a new principal department of the State with authority over agricultural policy.

This Order would transfer the powers and duties of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) relating to agriculture in Title 3 of the Alaska Statutes to the new Department of Agriculture. The Alaska Board of Agriculture and Conservation would be moved to the new department. The Commissioner of Agriculture would work jointly with the Commissioner of Natural Resources on the classification, leasing, and sale of state agricultural land. Additionally, the order would rename the Alaska Natural Resource Conservation and Development Board and designate the Commissioner of Agriculture as an ex-officio member.

This Executive Order will encourage the development of expertise, eliminate duplication of functions, and establish a single point of responsibility for state agriculture policy, enhancing performance and accountability.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent that the following letter of response, which was read by the Senate Secretary, be spread on the journal. There being no objection, it appears below:

Governor Dunleavy:

We are returning to you today Executive Order No. 137, which would establish the Department of Agriculture and transfer certain functions of the Department of Natural Resources relating to agriculture to the Department of Agriculture.

Under Art. III, sec. 23 of the Alaska Constitution, an executive order is the appropriate vehicle by which a governor may make changes in the organization of the executive branch or in the assignment of functions among its units which he considers necessary for efficient administration.

However, we respectfully decline to accept this Executive Order for consideration by the House and Senate, on the following grounds:

- 1) Introduction of an executive order during a special session is unprecedented and inconsistent with Art. III, sec. 23 and other provisions of the Alaska Constitution; Art. III, sec. 23 allows the legislature up to 60 days of a *regular* session to consider whether to disapprove an executive order, and the legislature may not be confined to a maximum 30-day special session to consider disapproval of an executive order.
- 2) The Alaska Constitution does not authorize reissuance of a rejected executive order in the same legislature. The 34th Alaska State Legislature already rejected EO 136, to establish a Department of Agriculture, through SSCR 1, on 3/19/25. Reintroduction of a previously rejected executive order in the same legislative session is contrary to the rules of procedure adopted by the legislature under Art. II, sec. 12 of the Alaska Constitution.

- 3) AS 24.08.210 does not allow transmittal of an executive order during a special session.

We encourage you to submit the matter to the Legislature, in the form of a bill, for introduction by the respective Rules Committees next session, where such a measure would receive consideration in each house and go through the normal legislative process.

Sincerely,

/s/

Senator Gary Stevens
Senate President

/s/

Representative Bryce Edgmon
Speaker of the House

Messages from the House

Message dated August 2 was read stating:

The House of Representatives respectfully invites the Senate to a Joint Session of the Thirty-fourth Alaska Legislature at 1:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 2 in the House Chambers to consider overriding the Governor's vetoes.

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Senate accept the House invitation to meet in Joint Session. Without objection, it was so ordered.

The Secretary was requested to notify the House.

Introduction and Reference of Senate Resolutions

SCR 101

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 101 BY THE
SENATE RULES COMMITTEE,

Authorizing the Senate and the House of
Representatives to recess for a period of more than
three days.

was read the first time. Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the resolution be taken up. Without objection, it was so ordered.

The question being: "Shall SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 101 Authorizing the Senate and the House of Representatives to recess for a period of more than three days, pass the Senate?" The roll was taken with the following result:

SCR 101

Final Passage

YEAS: 19 NAYS: 0 EXCUSED: 1 ABSENT: 0

Yeas: Bjorkman, Claman, Cronk, Dunbar, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Hoffman, Hughes, Kaufman, Kawasaki, Kiehl, Merrick, Myers, Olson, Stedman, Stevens, Tobin, Wielechowski, Yundt

Excused: Shower

and so, SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 101 passed the Senate and was referred to the Secretary for engrossment.

Introduction and Reference of Senate Bills

SB 1001

SENATE BILL NO. 1001 BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR, entitled:

"An Act relating to public school enrollment; relating to authorization of charter schools; establishing an after-school literacy grant program; and authorizing lump sum payments for certain teachers as retention and recruitment incentives."

was read the first time and referred to the Education and Finance Committees.

The following fiscal information was published today:

Fiscal Note No. 1, indeterminate, Department of Education and Early Development

Fiscal Note No. 2, Department of Education and Early
Development

Fiscal Note No. 3, Department of Education and Early
Development

Fiscal Note No. 4, Department of Education and Early
Development

Governor's transmittal letter dated August 1:

Dear President Stevens:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to education reform. The bill would expand enrollment options, authorize the State Board of Education and Early Development (Board) to approve charter schools, create an after-school literacy tutoring grant program, and provide recruitment and retention incentives for teachers.

This bill opens Alaska's public schools to all students by authorizing statewide open enrollment and expanding opportunities for new charter schools. Open enrollment would allow families to seek placement for their children in any public school, whether inside or outside their home district, subject to school capacity, regulations, and permitted preference policies. As for charter school expansion, the bill would require the Board to prescribe a process for the establishment of a charter school in any school district in the State by application to the Board.

The bill would also establish a literacy grant program, which would authorize DEED to provide grants to school districts for after-school literacy tutoring services. The Department would be directed to adopt regulations to implement and administer the program, including provisions for the award of grants and evaluation of the funded tutoring services. The total amount of grants awarded under the new law would be capped at \$10,000,000 per fiscal year.

Finally, the bill would provide for a recruitment and retention incentive payment to full-time teachers over the next three fiscal years, with higher amounts for schools in harder-to-staff locations.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

SB 1002

SENATE BILL NO. 1002 BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE
BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR, entitled:

"An Act relating to demonstration state-tribal education compacts; relating to demonstration state-tribal education compact schools; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the Education and Finance Committees.

The following fiscal information was published today:

Fiscal Note No. 1, zero, Department of Education and Early Development

Fiscal Note No. 2, zero, Department of Education and Early Development

Fiscal Note No. 3, Department of Education and Early Development

Governor's transmittal letter dated August 1:

Dear President Stevens:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18, of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill establishing a pilot program for demonstration State-Tribal Education Compact (STEC) schools.

Senate Bill 34 (2022) directed the Department of Education and Early Development (DEED) to negotiate a demonstration state-tribal education compact with federally recognized tribes and tribal organizations and to submit a report to the legislature relating to the demonstration state-tribal education compact and state-tribal education

compact schools. On January 31, 2024, DEED submitted its State Tribal Education Compact Schools Demonstration Legislative Report, based on its negotiations with five federally recognized tribes or tribal organizations that applied to participate: Central Council of the Tlingit and Haida Indian Tribes of Alaska, the Inupiat Community of the Arctic Slope, the Ketchikan Indian Community, the Knik Tribe, and the King Island Native Community in partnership with the Village of Solomon.

This bill takes the next step in launching STEC schools in Alaska by setting up a five-year pilot program for the five participating tribes and tribal organizations to enter into education compacts with DEED for the establishment of tribally operated Alaska public schools. The bill designates mandatory subjects that must be addressed in each compact but allows DEED and the participating tribes and tribal organizations to negotiate the details of each mandatory provision based on their individual needs and circumstances.

Demonstration STEC schools may be funded by the legislature as if they were schools in a regional education attendance area. Participating tribes and tribal organizations must report on student data and enrollment at their demonstration STEC schools to DEED on an annual basis and DEED will provide that information to the legislature in its annual progress reports. At the completion of the pilot program, DEED will provide a written report to the legislature summarizing the student data over the entire project period.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy

Governor

SB 1003

SENATE BILL NO. 1003 BY THE SENATE RULES COMMITTEE
BY REQUEST OF THE GOVERNOR, entitled:

"An Act relating to tax credits for contributions to public schools and programs operated by tribal entities or tribally empowered Alaska Native

organizations through a compact with the state; relating to tax credits for contributions to state-funded literacy programs; relating to the insurance tax education credit, the income tax education credit, the oil or gas producer education credit, the property tax education credit, the mining business education credit, the fisheries business education credit, and the fisheries resource landing tax education credit; and providing for an effective date."

was read the first time and referred to the Finance Committee.

The following fiscal information was published today:

Fiscal Note No. 1, zero, Department of Education and Early Development

Fiscal Note No. 2, indeterminate, Department of Revenue

Fiscal Note No. 3, zero, Department of Education and Early Development

Governor's transmittal letter dated August 1:

Dear President Stevens:

Under the authority of Article III, Section 18 of the Alaska Constitution, I am transmitting a bill relating to tax credits for contributions to public schools and programs operated by tribal entities or tribally empowered Alaska Native organizations through a compact with the state and tax credits for contributions to state-funded literacy programs.

This bill would extend tax credits to new qualifying contributions under the insurance tax education credit, the income tax education credit, the oil or gas producer education credit, the property tax education credit, the mining business education credit, the fisheries business education credit, and the fisheries resource landing tax education credit.

By leveraging private donations through tax incentives, this legislation creates a durable funding stream for tribal-compact schools and improves statewide literacy outcomes.

I urge your prompt and favorable action on this measure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Mike Dunleavy
Governor

Unfinished Business

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent Senator Stevens be excused from a call of the Senate today through August 31. Without objection, Senator Stevens was excused.

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate on the following dates:

Today through August 6
August 12
August 15
August 25 through August 27
September 3 through September 11
September 16
September 18 through September 26
September 29 through October 2

Without objection, Senator Giessel was excused.

Senator Kiehl moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate on the following dates:

from noon plane time, August 5 through evening plane time,
August 21
from afternoon plane time, September 15 through evening plane
time, September 18

Without objection, Senator Kiehl was excused.

Senator Claman moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate on the following dates:

from 8:00 a.m. August 3 through midnight September 3
from 8:00 a.m. September 12 through midnight September 22
from noon October 8 through midnight October 15

Without objection, Senator Claman was excused.

Senator Stedman moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate today through morning plane time, October 1. Without objection, Senator Stedman was excused.

Senator Hoffman moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate today through January 20, 2026. Without objection, Senator Hoffman was excused.

Senator Tobin moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate on the following dates:

from morning plane time, August 3 through evening plane time,
August 31
from September 3 through September 19
from September 24 through September 26
from October 22 through October 24
from November 25 through November 28
from December 1 through December 19

Without objection, Senator Tobin was excused.

Senator Merrick moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate from August 22 through August 30. Without objection, Senator Merrick was excused.

Senator Gray-Jackson moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate from morning plane time August 3 through January 20, 2026. Without objection, Senator Gray-Jackson was excused.

Senator Wielechowski moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate on the following dates:

from August 3 through August 10
from September 10 through September 18

Without objection, Senator Wielechowski was excused.

Senator Kaufman moved and asked unanimous consent to be excused from a call of the Senate from September 1 through December 30. Without objection, Senator Kaufman was excused.

Recess

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Senate stand in recess to the Joint Session. Without objection, the Senate recessed at 11:20 a.m.

After Recess

Joint Session in the House

Speaker Edgmon called the House to order and in accordance with Uniform Rule 51 turned the gavel over to President Stevens, who called the Joint Session to order at 1:31 p.m. The purpose of the Joint Session was to consider the Governor's vetoes.

The roll call of the Senate was taken and there were nineteen members present. Senator Shower was excused.

The roll of the House was taken and there were forty members present.

SB 183

Senator Giessel moved SENATE BILL NO. 183 "An Act relating to hindering the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee; relating to the powers of the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee and the legislative audit division; and providing for an effective date" become law notwithstanding the governor's veto.

The question being: "Shall SB 183 become law notwithstanding the governor's veto?" The roll was taken with the following result:

SENATE JOURNAL

1434

August 2, 2025

HOUSE

SB 183

Veto Override

YEAS: 27 NAYS: 13 EXCUSED: 0 ABSENT: 0

Yeas: Burke, Bynum, Carrick, Coulombe, Dibert, Edgmon, Eischeid, Elam, Fields, Foster, Galvin, Gray, Hall, Hannan, Himschoot, Holland, Jimmie, Josephson, Kopp, Mears, Mina, Nelson, Ruffridge, Saddler, Schrage, Story, Stutes

Nays: Allard, Costello, Johnson, McCabe, Moore, Prax, Rauscher, Schwanke, Stapp, Tilton, Tomaszewski, Underwood, Vance

SENATE

SB 183

Veto Override

YEAS: 16 NAYS: 3 EXCUSED: 1 ABSENT: 0

Yeas: Bjorkman, Claman, Dunbar, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Hoffman, Kaufman, Kawasaki, Kiehl, Merrick, Olson, Stedman, Stevens, Tobin, Wielechowski, Yundt

Nays: Cronk, Hughes, Myers

Excused: Shower

TOTALS YEAS: 43 NAYS: 16 EXCUSED: 1 ABSENT: 0

And so, the governor's veto was overridden.

The Senate Secretary notified the Office of the Governor.

HB 53

Senator Giessel moved the appropriations on page 104, lines 4-6 and 10-11 of CONFERENCE CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 53(brf sup maj fld H) "An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; amending appropriations; making supplemental appropriations; and providing for an effective date" become law notwithstanding the governor's veto.

The question being: "Shall the appropriation on page 104, lines 4-6 and 10-11 of CONFERENCE CS FOR HOUSE BILL NO. 53(brf sup maj fld H) "An Act making appropriations for the operating and loan program expenses of state government and for certain programs; capitalizing funds; amending appropriations; making supplemental appropriations; and providing for an effective date" become law notwithstanding the governor's veto?" The roll was taken with the following result:

SENATE

CCS HB 53(brf sup maj fld H)

Override Line-Item Veto on page 104, lines 4-6 and 10-11

YEAS: 17 NAYS: 2 EXCUSED: 1 ABSENT: 0

Yeas: Bjorkman, Claman, Cronk, Dunbar, Giessel, Gray-Jackson, Hoffman, Kaufman, Kawasaki, Kiehl, Merrick, Olson, Stedman, Stevens, Tobin, Wielechowski, Yundt

Nays: Hughes, Myers

Excused: Shower

HOUSE

CCS HB 53(brf sup maj fld H)

Page 104, lines 4-6 and 10-11

Override Line Item Veto

YEAS: 28 NAYS: 12 EXCUSED: 0 ABSENT: 0

Yeas: Burke, Bynum, Carrick, Coulombe, Dibert, Edgmon, Eischeid, Elam, Fields, Foster, Galvin, Gray, Hall, Hannan, Himschoot, Holland, Jimmie, Josephson, Kopp, Mears, Mina, Nelson, Ruffridge, Saddler, Schrage, Stapp, Story, Stutes

Nays: Allard, Costello, Johnson, McCabe, Moore, Prax, Rauscher, Schwanke, Tilton, Tomaszewski, Underwood, Vance

TOTALS YEAS: 45 NAYS: 14 EXCUSED: 1 ABSENT: 0

And so, the governor's line item veto was overridden.

Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Joint Session

stand in adjournment. Without objection, President Stevens adjourned the Joint Session at 1:48 p.m.

After Recess

In the Senate

The Senate reconvened at 3:44 p.m.

Unfinished Business (continued)

SB 183

The engrossed and enrolled copies of the following were transmitted to Emily Nauman, Director of Legal Services:

SENATE BILL NO. 183

"An Act relating to hindering the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee; relating to the powers of the Legislative Budget and Audit Committee and the legislative audit division; and providing for an effective date"

Announcements

Rule 23(d) of the Alaska State Legislature Uniform Rules is currently in effect.

Announcements are at the end of the journal.

Engrossment

SCR 101

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 101 Authorizing the Senate and the House of Representatives to recess for a period of more than three days, was engrossed, signed by the President and Secretary and transmitted to the House for consideration.

Adjournment

In accordance with SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 101, Senator Giessel moved and asked unanimous consent the Senate stand in adjournment until 10:00 a.m., August 19, 2025. Without objection, the Senate adjourned at 3:44 p.m.

Liz Clark
Secretary of the Senate

Announcements

Americans with Disabilities Act Notice - Persons with disabilities who require special accommodation or alternative communication formats to access committee meetings may contact the appropriate committee office or the Legislative Information Office in their community. Reasonable advance notice is needed to accommodate the request. For further information, call the ADA Coordinator at 465-3854 Voice/465-4980 TDD.

OTHER MEETINGS

JOINT SESSION

Aug 02	Saturday	House Chamber	1:00 PM
+	Consideration of the Governor's Vetoes		